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## BOTANY.

**A New Edition of Wolle's Desmids.**—Botanists who failed to secure a copy of the first edition of Wolle's "Desmids of the United States," and who were meditating whether or not to pay the extortionate prices charged by the antiquarian booksellers, will be glad to know that the author has brought out a new edition with considerable additions, which he is offering at \$6.50. The book was well worthy of this new edition, which will doubtless find a ready sale.

**Botanical Definitions.**—It is the misfortune of every science that it has a mass of technical words or of words with technical meanings, which must be defined before they can be understood by the general reader. Indeed the number of these terms is so great in some sciences, notably Botany, that even the professional botanist is obliged to turn to some handy volume for the meaning of a strange word. So we must have glossaries and dictionaries of scientific terms. The latest one to appear is Crozier's "Dictionary of Botanical Terms," a pretty volume of about 200 pages, upon which the publishers (Holt & Co.) have done well their share of the work. Turning to the substance of the volume we find it disappointing. While it catalogues about 6000 words and omits few words of importance, and while its definitions are generally not false, they are in very many cases so meagre as to leave the user of the book little wiser after than before consultation. The author has failed to distinguish between a true statement regarding a word, and a *definition* of the word. Many of the definitions in this book do not define. As examples, see Accessory Gonidia ("gonidial formations in some species of Mucorini in addition to the typical kind"), Apical Cell ("the generating cell of a growing point"), Archegonium ("the female organ in the higher cryptogams"), Basidiospore ("a spore borne on a basidium, as those of mushrooms"), Linnæan System ("the system of classification devised by Linnæus, founded upon the number and arrangement of the stamens and pistils; sexual system"), Sexual System ("see Linnæan system"). On the other hand, some of the definitions of the new terms are well drawn. The older terms fare pretty well, and are as well defined as they usually are. It is the new terms which often fare badly. Yet such a book is not wholly useless. When one needs to confirm his impression as to the meaning of a word it will be helpful, for, as indicated

above, the statements are generally true. The general reader, however, and the beginner in botany who meets a word for the first time and who seeks a definition which will give him a clear notion of its meaning, will often turn away disappointed.—CHARLES E. BESSEY.

**Timely Words as to the Nomenclature Question.**—At this time, when there is not a little of ferment and effervescence over the rules which should govern in the nomenclature of plants, it will be well for us all to read the following remarks made by Alph. De Candolle in the introduction to the "Paris Code" of 1867. They convey very well the ideas of the "moderns" of to-day.

"The system of nomenclature of organized beings, founded by Linnæus, was looked upon until the middle of this century as extremely ingenious, and has been thought, by some authors, a most admirable one. It was quoted in philosophical lectures and found superior to that of chemical nomenclature, on account of its adapting itself more readily to changes necessitated by the progress of discovery. Botanists professed for it the greatest veneration. They boasted of having developed a better nomenclature than zoologists, which is not surprising, as the most illustrious botanists, thirty or forty years ago, gave infinitely more attention to this subject than zoologists.

Nevertheless, of late years, a change has been perceptible; opinion is wavering, enthusiasm abated. Here and there, in different countries, doubts have arisen and complaints have been made regarding the system of botanical nomenclature." \* \* \*

"It follows that it is useful—every twenty years, for instance—to revise the *ensemble* of received rules." \* \* \*

"Without going far back it is easy to see that since the end of the eighteenth century botanists have endeavored to free themselves from many useless shackles put on by Linnæus and tightened by his disciples, above all with relation to the choice of generic names. De Candolle [the elder, in *Théorie Élémentaire*] was ruled by the idea of having the law of priority properly respected, a law which, fifty years ago, was often unscrupulously infringed." \* \* \*

"The time must however come, when actually existing vegetable forms having all been described, herbaria containing undoubted types of them, botanists having made, unmade, or oftentimes remade, elevated or lowered, and above all modified, some hundred thousand groups, from orders downward to simple varieties of species, the number of synonyms having become infinitely greater than that of admitted groups—it will become necessary to effect some great revolution in the

formation of science. This nomenclature that we are striving to improve will have the appearance of an old scaffolding, made up of parts laboriously renewed one by one, and surrounded by a heap of more or less embarrassing rubbish, arising from the accumulation of pieces successively rejected. The edifice of Science will have been constructed, but it will not be sufficiently clear of all that has served to raise it. Perhaps there will then come to light something very different from the Linnæan nomenclature—something will have been devised for giving definite names to definite groups.” \* \* \*

“In the meanwhile, let us improve the system of binomial nomenclature introduced by Linnæus. Let us endeavor to accommodate it to the continued and necessary alterations that take place in science, and for this purpose let us diffuse as well as we can the principles of the method; let us attack slight abuses, slight negligence, and let us come, if possible, to an understanding on debated points. We shall thus have prepared, for some years to come, the way for better carrying out works on systematic botany.”

**Engler and Prantl’s “*Natürlichen Pflanzenfamilien*.”**—This great work is making such headway that another year will nearly complete it. During 1893 we are promised the *Fungi*, *Hepaticæ*, *Musci* and the *Pteridophytes*. The *Gymnosperms* and *Monocotylodons*, are already completed, while but few families of the *Dicotylodons* remain to be worked. Recent numbers treat of the *Compositæ* (74), *Oleaceæ*, *Salvadoraceæ* and *Loganiaceæ* (75), and *Myxogasters* and *Fungi* (76), the last by the well-known Mycologist Schröter. His tabular view of the system of classification of the *Fungi* which he adopts is instructive. See page 50.

|             |                 |                                   |   |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Phycomyces. | Oömycetes.      | Sporangieæ { Hemisporangieæ ..... | { Chytridineæ.<br>Ancylistineæ.                 |
|             |                 | { Eusporangieæ.....               | { Monoblepharidineæ.<br>Saprolegnineæ.          |
|             | Conidieæ.....   |                                   | { Cystopodineæ.<br>Peronosporineæ.              |
|             | Zygomycetes.    | Sporangieæ.....                   | { Mucorineæ.                                    |
|             |                 | Conidieæ .....                    | { Entomophthorineæ.                             |
|             | Ascomycetes.    | Hemiasceæ .....                   | { Protomycetineæ.<br>Ascoidineæ.                |
|             |                 | Protoasceæ.....                   | { Saccharomycetineæ.<br>Endomycetineæ.          |
|             |                 | Eusceæ.                           | Hymeniosceæ.                                    |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Holoasceæ.                        | Gymnocarpeæ.....                                |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Hymeniosceæ.                      | Hemikleistocarpeæ.....                          |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Holoasceæ.                        | Kleistocarpeæ.....                              |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Plectasceæ.....                   | { Gymnoasceineæ.<br>Elaphomycetineæ.            |
|             |                 | Pyrenoasceæ .....                 | { Perisporineæ.<br>Sphaeriineæ.<br>Hysteriineæ. |
| Eumycetes.  | Basidiomycetes. | Hemibasidiæ.....                  | { Ustilagineæ.<br>Tilletineæ.                   |
|             |                 | Protobasidiæ.                     | Phragmobasidiæ .....                            |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Schizobasidiæ.....                | Uredineæ.<br>Auricularineæ.                     |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Tremellineæ.                      | Dacryomycetineæ.<br>Exobosidiineæ.              |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Thelephorineæ.                    | Clavariineæ.<br>Hydneineæ.                      |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Polyporineæ.                      | Boletineæ.<br>Agaricineæ.                       |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Phallineæ.                        | Hymenogastriineæ.<br>Lycoperdineæ.              |
|             |                 |                                   |   |
|             |                 | Nidulariineæ.                     | Sclerodermineæ.                                 |
|             |                 |                                   |   |